/147 cont./

583 A girl's marriage does not involve any dowry in the African sense of the term, but it involves payment of the price of virginity to the mother. This payment is made after consummation of the marriage (or after defloration if there has been a clandestine union). It consists of seven pieces of cloth, a demijohn of tafia, and various imported objects (the whole representing in 1958 about 8,000 francs, which is relatively small for the Refugee Blacks). It really has to do with the price of virginity, for nothing is paid back if there is a break-up. The man moreover gives the girl white beads /possibly "pearls" --Tr./, red cloth, and sweetmeats which constitute the payment of her akka.

[429] The price of virginity is paid to the person who has raised the girl, even if it is a man. This person divides it equally with the mother or, if the latter is dead, with the mother's sisters.

For example, for O Baïkom (D,u, F10), brought up by her father Malobi in Loka village, her husband Moomu (Kotika) paid the price of virginity to Malobi who shared it with his wife Béniti.

[604] [613] No payment is made to the uncles or to the head of the lineage.

836 [599] The fact that a girl may carry on a clandestine affair and be deflowered without having been properly proposed to is considered a shame for the mother; but if the seducer confesses and pays the price of virginity, honor is restored.

Defloration does not necessarily entail marriage, for the seducer does not always intend to take on the maintenance of a household.

If the girl is deflowered too young, her mother does not give her the pagi and continues to forbid her to have sexual relations, for she fears that she may become pregnant. Now for 848 a girl, becoming pregnant without having concluded a contract 568 of maintenance with a man is an extreme shame, for that means she is not worth anything.

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584 539 I do not know whether thou lovest me, whether thou wilt answer yes or no; perhaps I am not so handsome as thou, but I cannot help loving thee. If thou lovest me, tell me clearly. I have come, I have attached my boat to a rock, I have wet my feet before reaching land (2)."

2. High-flown words to which no precise meaning can be attached; it is a kind of verbal music whose formulas vary infinitely.

"Come back tomorrow, come back, I cannot answer thee today, I cannot."

"I know for today, but not for tomorrow (3); yield to me,

3. One must understand: It is necessary to decide today.

be mine, I shall give thee the garment (4)."

4. The man lays down one of his garments at the home of the woman who has agreed to marry him.

584 Our departure on our tour the next day put an end to his attempts for the time being!

836 684 It often happens that the girl allows herself to be seduced; her mother soon learns of it from the village people. She flies into a passion, beats her daughter to obtain a confession without which she can obtain nothing from the supposed seducer. It is an extreme shame for a mother not to receive the price of her

[658]

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836 684 [558] daughter's virginity: the other women will make fun of her and as for the men, they will be unanimous in laughing cruelly at the new trick played on the women. Now certain girls refuse obstinately to confess, or they have already had several adventures, so that nobody succeeds in knowing the truth. After many recriminations and arguments the affair proceeds no further.

If it has been possible to identify the seducer with certainty, the mother, arming herself with a stick, goes from village to village to find him; his uncles intervene and end by settling the business by asking the mother to accept, since there is nothing else to do, the payment for virginity. This sum absolutely must be paid; if the young man were not able to do it, his uncles would pay it for him even if they have to turn against him ultimately. The mother accepts the payment, honor is safe.

583 In many cases the couple consider themselves as joined, at least temporarily; the man prepares, if he is hard working, to build a house for his wife. If he is not hard working, he simply promises to make one for her some day; in reality he has spared himself this great labor; the woman will have to wait for years unless her mother or one of her uncles dies, bequeathing her his or her house. /149/

836 684 Observation in Boniville in October, 1956:

A village woman comes to complain to Fintiman that his nephew and ward Doni has deflowered her daughter Elina, 15 years old, in July of the same year. She learned it indirectly, and the daughter expressly confessed it. Doni admitted the facts; he promised to pay the indemnity at the end of the border-fixing mission when he has received his pay. Elina continues to wear the kwey until further orders and does not show any embarrassment. Doni comes back in the evening. I hear Fintiman reprimand him, but only for form's sake: "Deflowering a girl when one does not intend to live with her is something which is

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586 [128] The estimate of the average number of divorces for women born before 1896 is probably lower than the actual number, their first divorces not being well known to our informants. It is probably in the neighborhood of two.

586 593 178 The increase in frequency of divorces among young women is striking. It is related to the weakening of the authority, very strong in former times, exercised by mothers over their daughters. Here are two examples concerning two girls we have known since their childhood.

836 [558] Lomé (L2, F74, Boniville) born in 1938, began to cause people to talk about her in 1954. She was deflowered by N..., who did not want to marry her. Then she had relations with Asadam (K, Boniville), who did not want to marry her either. She was beaten; she continued to see him. Now this is extremely shameful for a girl because it is placing herself in a state of inferiority with respect to a man, when her self-respect consists in making a contract between equals.

582 586 587 Her brother Amèmbé beat her, and she ended up by marrying Pitipiti (Aw.B.2, Asisi village), who formally asked for her in marriage in 1956. This marriage lasted less than a year. In 1957 Lomé divorced him to marry Djoni (Kotika village).

584 584 585 [429] 586 Aguba (D u, G14), girl of Asisi-Dju village, born in 1941, had been proposed to with the customary formalities in May, 1956 by Païtiki (L2, Loka village), a young man of 18. It was agreed that the engaged couple would wait two years. But Païtiki did not wait and consummated the marriage clandestinely at the end of a few months. Lènga, Aguba's aunt and guardian, became very angry and beat her. She did not give her the [illegible] until May, 1957. The marriage lasted only a few months. /157/ By the end of 1957 Aguba was breaking off with Païtiki and beginning openly to look for adventures.

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784 756 751 If someone realizes that he has broken his kina, he goes to see, not an ɔbiaman, but the specialist-healer of leprosy and asks him to treat him by way of prevention.

411 832 177 558 Beliefs about guns and hunting. The gun, which entered the everyday life of the Refugee Blacks two centuries ago, has taken an important place in their magic. It is the symbol of virility. A Refugee Black who no longer has a gun is a man humiliated and almost dishonored. As one of them explained to us in begging us to help him replace his old gun eaten by rust: "If you cannot present yourself before the women with a machete, hunting bag on your shoulder, and gun in your hand, you are not a man."

411 754 This idea has been transposed onto the plane of magic and they take for granted that the wisimã can, by putting evil spells on a gun, attack the owner of the weapon in his virility. It is supposed to be enough for someone to put his finger into the barrel of the gun while uttering a formula of vengeance, or even being moved by hate for the owner of the weapon, for this gun to be no longer capable of hitting the mark. So, to avoid these misfortunes, the Boni never part with their guns and never lend them to anyone. If, in spite of these precautions, they 411 789 have the impression that a gun no longer fires so well, they will go to an ɔbiaman to have it washed of maleficent influence. There exist for that purpose several remedies all of which consist of soaking the gun for one to three days in infusions of leaves, which has the unfailing result of making it rust. We have seen a hammerless, latest model gun spoiled thus by an intelligent Boni head boatman, a clever mechanic and usually full of good sense.

224 We have never witnessed among the Boni any individual or collective hunting rites claiming to attract game or to promote meeting it (when, on the contrary, hunting piayes are extremely widespread among the Creoles).

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842 996 A few weeks afterward she found herself pregnant, and it seemed obvious to all that this was the doing of a Wata Ingi.

845 No magic power is attributed to the tɔne pikin, any more than special mental or physical characteristics. But it is assumed that they are the object of a special protection, and that they cannot be harmed with impunity.

771 789 435 The sacred character of payment. Relations between the gods and men always have the character of a bargain, among the Refugee Blacks: an irritated divinity is never appeased by repentance or good will; it requires that it be paid; likewise, an ɔbia is of value only for the person who has paid for it. Refugee Blacks will never utilize ready-made magic recipes: uttering certain words, making certain gestures; face to face with such a recipe they will ask immediately: "From what [P/2] god does this ɔbia come, and whom must one pay?" It seems that in their conception every transference of a spiritual power or a magic force disturbs something in the proper functioning of the universe; payment restores this equilibrium, it is the [M] mark of legitimacy. Some Creoles of African ancestry transpose the same idea with respect to Christianity, and this is /258/ why they insist so much on paying for masses and buying 759 558 "orisons" (ǂ). One observes likewise that free medical care

> 1. Written prayer to which is attached protective power. This notion, borrowed from the rustic magic of 17th-century France, seems to have been introduced into Guiana by the first European colonists.

lowers the prestige of the doctor in the eyes of all.